



THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF INTERPRETERS IN INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

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17 March 2005

Time and Space

- What is our timeframe?
 - Pre-European settlement?
 - What about Native Americans?
 - Should we set a global standard?
- What boundaries do we use?
 - Counties, states, regions, continents?

Uncertainty!



What's in a Name?

weed

non-native

non-indigenous

alien

aggressive

nuisance

foreign

colonizer

naturalized

exotic

introduced

biological pollution

invasive

pest

neobiota

noxious weed

non-native edificators

transformers

disturbance-tolerant native



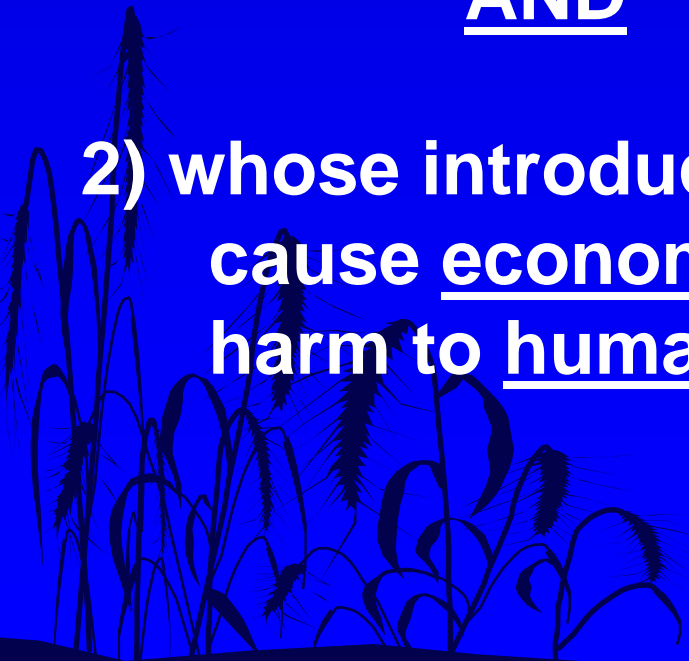
NPS Invasive Species

1) alien to the ecosystem under consideration

AND

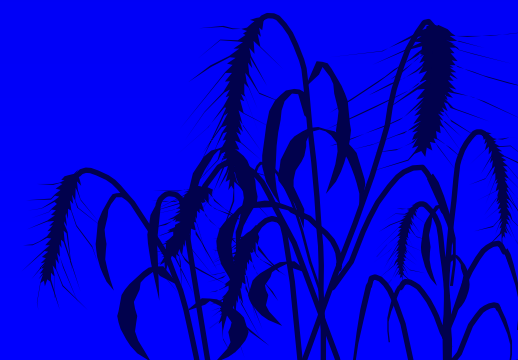
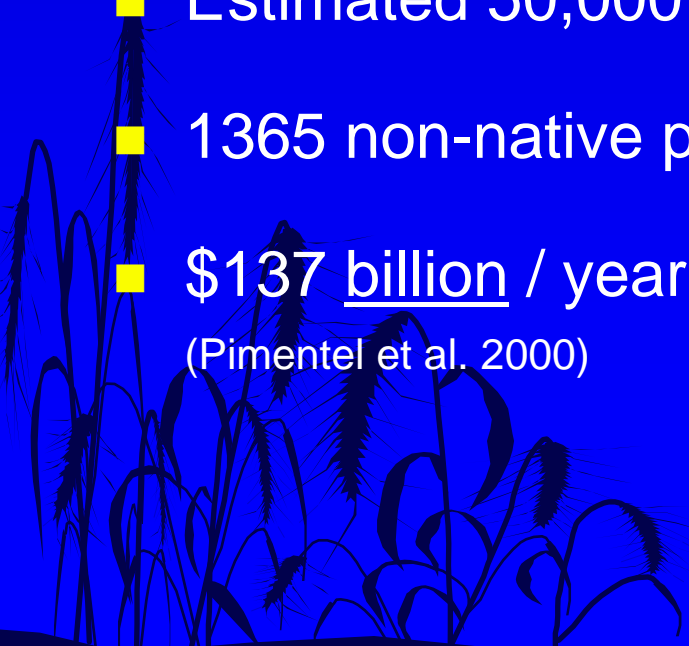
2) whose introduction causes or is likely to
cause economic or environmental harm or
harm to human health.

(NISC 1999)

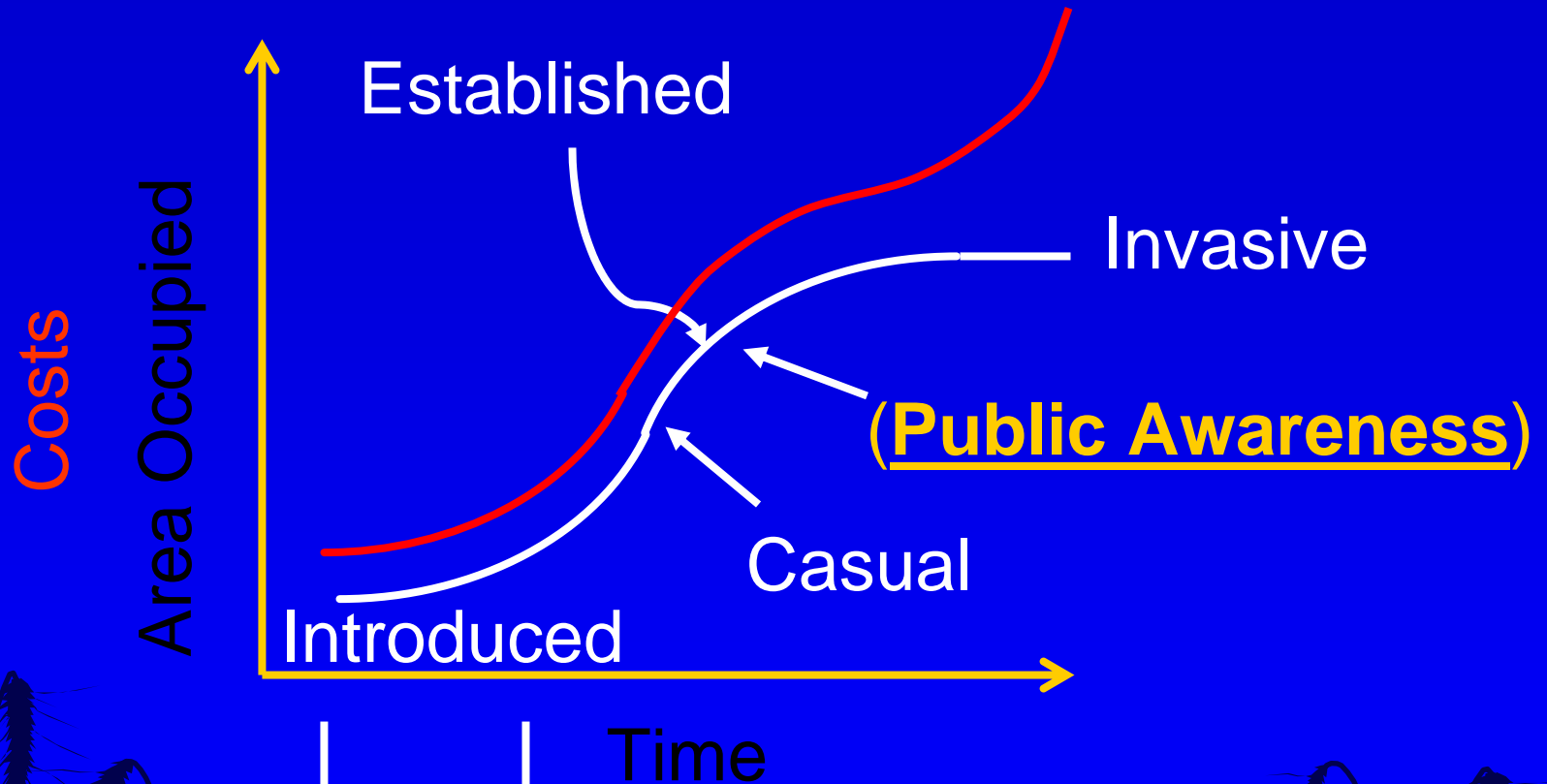


So What's the Big Deal

- Single biggest combined threat to natural areas (Marler 1998; Benjamin 2001)
- #2 cause of biodiversity loss globally (Vitousek 1996; Wilcove et al. 1998)
- Estimated 50,000 non-native species introduced / year
- 1365 non-native plants in US
- \$137 billion / year in the US for invasive species control (Pimentel et al. 2000)



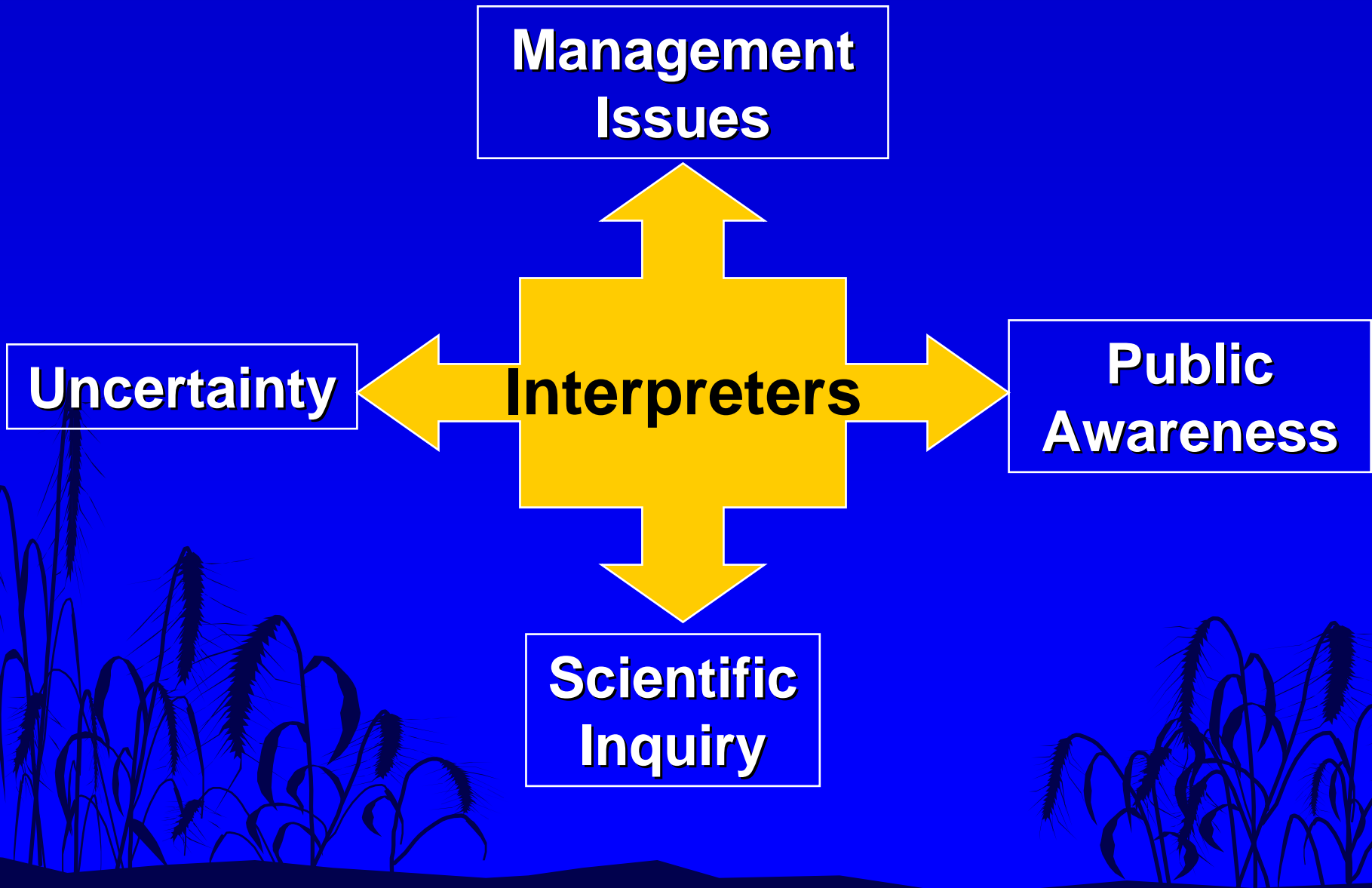
Management and Public Awareness



Eradication window

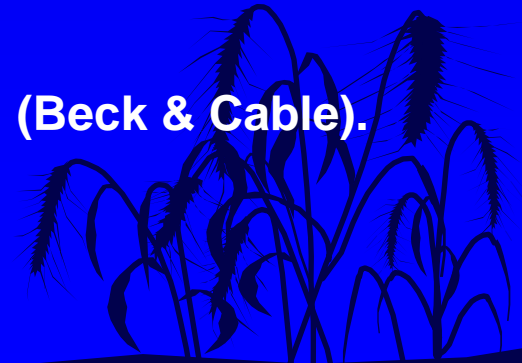
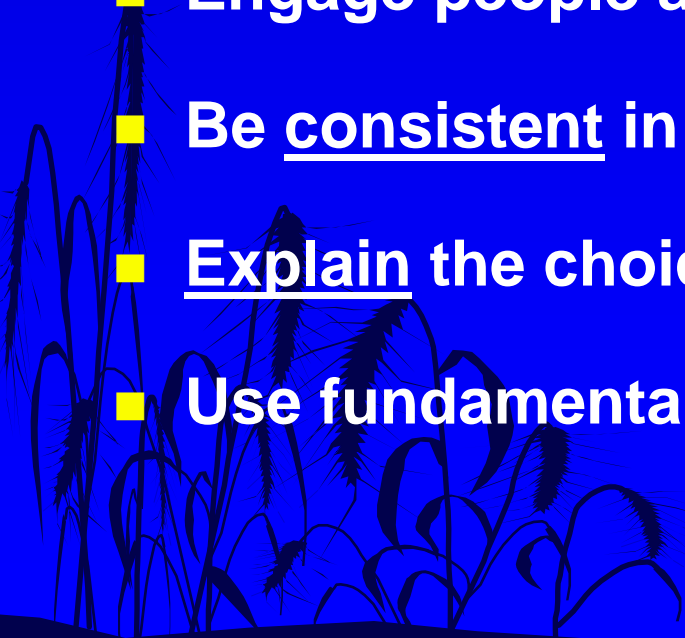
(After Chippendale
1991, Naylor 2000,
McNeely 2001)

Importance of Interpreters



Tips for Interpreters

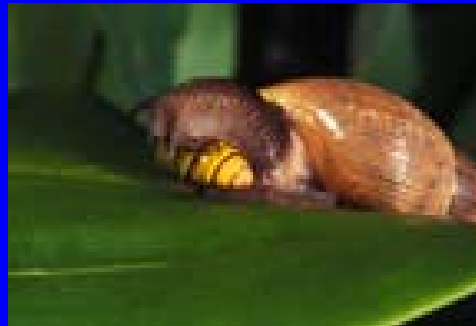
- Species are NOT good or bad (undesirable).
- Focus on ecological and cultural impacts.
- Relate ecological and cultural processes to humans.
- Engage people at a local scale (sense of place)!
- Be consistent in the use of terms.
- Explain the choice of terms.
- Use fundamental interpretive principles (Beck & Cable).



The Problem

Ultimately, invasive species are a human problem, a problem rooted in human causes and human values.

(McNeely 2001)



And The Solution?

An informed public that is aware of the threats...is very important in cultivating the political will needed for rapid response plans.

(US EPA 2004)

...PEOPLE!





Place in their minds only a spark!

Anatole France